

CLAIMS AMENDMENT

In the claims:

1. (Presently Amended). An inoculum for application to plants, said inoculum comprising a carrier and an effective quantity of a biologically pure bacterial culture of bacteria, the bacteria selected from *Klebsiella pneumoniae* 342 (ATCC No. PTA-2743), *Klebsiella pneumoniae* zmvsy (ATCC No. PTA-2741), and mutant strains derived therefrom, said mutant strains able to enhance the growth of plants.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Canceled).

4. (Previously Presented). A biologically pure bacterial culture wherein the bacteria is selected from *Klebsiella pneumoniae* 342 (ATCC No. PTA-2743) and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* zmvsy (ATCC No. PTA-2741).

5. (Previously Presented). A biologically pure culture of a mutant strain, the mutant strain derived from either *Klebsiella pneumoniae* 342 (ATCC No. PTA-2743) or *Klebsiella pneumoniae* zmvsy (ATCC No. PTA-2741), wherein the mutant strain retains the ability to enhance the growth of plants.

6. (Canceled).

7. (Canceled).

8. (Canceled).

9. (Canceled).

10. (Canceled).

11. (Canceled).

12. (Canceled).

13. (Withdrawn). A method for identifying *Klebsiella pneumoniae* bacterial strains having the ability to enhance the growth of a cereal grass plant, said method comprising the steps of:

isolating a bacterial isolate wherein the isolate a *Klebsiella pneumoniae* bacterial strain;

planting a cereal grass seed or a cereal grass seedling with said test material in a planting medium;

growing said planted cereal grass seed or said cereal grass seedling for a time sufficient to allow for a growing seedling to develop and be evaluated for growth enhancement; and

evaluating the growing seedling for evidence of enhanced growth when compared to a growing seedling grown in the absence of test material.

14. (Canceled).

15. (Canceled).

16. (Canceled).

17. (Canceled).